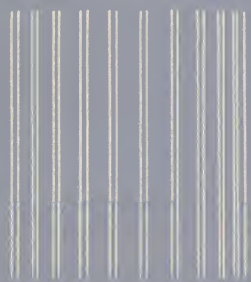




COLUMBIA
LIBRARY
COLUMNS



FALL 1951
VOL. I · NO. I

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COLUMBIA LIBRARY COLUMNS



PUBLISHED BY

THE FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA LIBRARIES

VOLUME I

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MOST Commencement visitors quickly notice that at Columbia the academic procession starts from one library and moves to seats beside Alma Mater on the steps of another. The central campus is dominated by these two buildings. This is singularly appropriate, for according to the best information available, the libraries of no other university in the world are as actively used as Columbia's are. The circle of scholars, students, and private citizens who are responsible for this record is not impressed with it; everything considered, it seems the thing to be expected. But they are impressed with books and libraries, and to this fact *Columbia Library Columns* owes its birth. With the assistance of Friends of the Libraries, the University is able to launch a new medium dedicated to a high purpose. That purpose is to further discussion of the university library and of the problems which have to be dealt with to insure its healthy development.

The new publication will be issued three times each year. It will reflect Columbia thought. It will in fact serve as a channel of communication among those who are especially interested in the Columbia Libraries. But the problems of these Libraries could hardly be considered unique, and *Columbia Library Columns*, if it succeeds in dealing imaginatively with topics which engage the attention of persons interested generally in libraries, may eventually prove of interest to readers beyond the immediate Columbia orbit. In the meantime, a prayer for a good take-off!

CARL M. WHITE, Director of Libraries,
Dean of the School of Library Service

I Found Myself in a Library

MARK VAN DOREN

Professor Mark Van Doren was the principal speaker at the first meeting of the Friends of the Columbia Libraries on May 1, 1951. He has written out part of his address for the COLUMNS.

IT SEEMS to have been assumed that I would talk tonight upon a literary topic. But I have been doing that in this university ten times weekly for more than thirty years, and now that I stand in the Rotunda of Low Memorial Library I find that I much prefer to speak of the thing which has brought us together here: the library, or if you insist the libraries, of Columbia University. There are thirty-three of those, but to me they are one thing, and I have lived with it long enough to love it as I love the university itself. I have lived with it and in it, for it and by it, ever since I first came to Columbia in 1915 as a graduate student. And of it I have many memories which I hope you will indulge, however personal they may sound as I recall them.

If a given library has not a great personal importance for one or more individuals who use it, then it may have no importance at all. The idea that learning is going on, or that culture is being advanced, is somehow less interesting, to me at any rate, than the thought that some one man or woman, young or old, and probably young, is sitting and reading a book and being changed as Whitman, say, was changed by reading Emerson; or Keats by reading Shakespeare; or Shakespeare by reading Plutarch; or Plutarch by reading the historians and philosophers who preceded him. This thing has happened in many a library, and we may be sure that it has happened here. It is more moving to contemplate than the doing of assignments or the conducting of research, at least if the assignments and the research are routine for those who do them. The solitary person who reads and is changed by what he reads is probably at that moment the quietest person on earth; but the earth may become a different place for everybody else because of his experience with a book.

And the book may not be one that he entered the building to read. He may find it by accident as he looks along the shelves—as-

suming that there are shelves to which he has free access. There were such shelves in this room thirty-six years ago, and it is of them that I primarily speak. Their equivalent is elsewhere now, for Columbia has never forgotten the function they performed, but it is a pleasure to remind myself—and doubtless you—of how they looked then, how they felt and smelled, and what stood on them. This room then was not a place for speeches; silence ruled it, for it was the Reading Room of the Columbia Library. In the center was a circle of low shelves containing encyclopedias and dictionaries. Then came concentric circles of desks for readers. Then, outermost of all, and crucial to my theme, stood further circles of tall bookcases in which, if one cared to explore them, there lay the materials for one's liberal education.

My memory is that we all explored them. I can see their sections now, labelled for our convenience—Shakespeare and the Elizabethan drama; French, German, Italian, Icelandic, and Oriental literature; the histories of Gibbon, Gardiner, Macaulay, Herodotus, Thucydides, and the rest—including, I suddenly recollect, Hodgkin's *Italy and Her Invaders*, a copious work which I never got around to reading as my friend and contemporary Joseph Wood Krutch did; but his enthusiasm for it has lasted in me all these years, so that I still promise myself the pleasure he had then. There was a special section, too, of books recently acquired; someone had chosen these extremely well, for we wanted to read all of them, just as we wanted to devour the entire contents of this great round room where for years we chiefly lived. Upstairs, of course, there were the department reading rooms, with passages between them that boomed with the steps of invisible students pounding to and fro. And in still remoter regions there must have been books of whose existence we never knew. But here was the core of the Columbia Library, at least so far as we were concerned; and elsewhere now it is still the core, the first and final excuse, for any library's being.

The indispensable books are the books we must keep on reading. Even scholars, who live for the latest knowledge, must keep on reading those books which are neither old nor new, neither early nor late in human time. Our temptation in these days when it

is so easy to record all our doings is to forget how transient most of those doings are; is to assume, for instance, that the last fifty years outshine the centuries before them. Judging by the sudden expansion of our libraries in order that they may contain, in so far as this is possible, evidence of all that we are and do and say, we of this time outweigh a hundred generations before us. And yet we secretly know that it is not true. And that is why we keep the core books where they should be, in the living center of libraries which without them might confuse and overwhelm us to the point of despair. Or so Columbia does, and all of us here are happy because she does. The future no less than the past function of great libraries like ours is to stand at the true intellectual center, the center of the learning and the remembering process; is to be a monument to all time and not one time alone. Professors may wander from that post, but the librarian never can, and in this university there is no sign that he ever will. The Reading Room has become the Rotunda, but the Libraries remain. They are man's whole memory, and the unspeakable glory thereof.



University Libraries Are Part of the Nation's Strength

GRAYSON KIRK

Dr. Grayson Kirk, Vice President and Provost of Columbia University, was one of the speakers at the first meeting of the Friends of the Columbia Libraries. We print here the substance of his remarks.

AN AMERICAN scholar who works in libraries abroad often comes back with fresh realization of the achievements of research libraries in his homeland. Part of the satisfaction comes from getting back into the ways and the surroundings he knows best. But this is not all. Through their systems of cataloging and classification, carefully planned buildings, well-organized services and highly trained staffs, American libraries have an orderliness, an ease of access, which is a remarkable achievement.

But in the end, the collections themselves determine the library's worth to the scholar. The libraries of the New World are young compared to those of Europe and not long ago American scholars in most fields were severely handicapped unless they could travel to collections of source material nowhere available at home. The nations of the world continue to depend on one another for cultural materials, but the twentieth century has seen the American scholar gain a new independence based on the impressive strength of contemporary American library collections.

This strength is one of the great assets of our nation. It must be preserved and enhanced if the United States is to maintain its position of democratic world leadership. Such leadership depends on intellectual primacy in a vast variety of fields. Without well-equipped libraries, this would be unthinkable. Our libraries are truly one of our greatest arsenals of democracy.

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The Organizing Committee and Its Activities

MERLE M. HOOVER

Secretary, Library Development Plan Committee

THE "Friends of the Columbia Libraries," of which *Columbia Library Columns* is the official organ, is the successor of a former organization, "The Friends of the Library of Columbia University," which operated from 1928 to 1938.

This first Friends' organization was the shadow of three distinguished men—George A. Plimpton, David Eugene Smith, and Frank D. Fackenthal. These three attracted around them a membership of ten Honorary Life Members and two hundred and fifty lay members both from the campus and off campus. The group was successful from the start. It created an area of good feeling about the Columbia Library and its interests. It also contributed to the Library a series of gifts, notably the David Eugene Smith Collection of mathematical books and materials and the George A. Plimpton Collection of textbooks. The organization flourished until its work was interrupted by the long illness of David Eugene Smith. When that grand old gentleman and scholar died in 1938, the organization died with him.

During the years since his death the necessity for a like organization has become increasingly evident. Analogous groups around the Libraries of Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Rutgers, and other universities have been highly successful, and their success has been publicized through attractive publications. It was manifest destiny that Columbia and some of her well-wishers, members of what President Eisenhower terms the "Columbia family," should attempt to revive the interrupted work of the earlier organization.

Early in 1950 a group of devotees gathered around Dean Carl White; Henry Rogers Benjamin, General Chairman of the Development Program for the University Libraries; and Dallas Pratt, Chairman of the Development Plan Committee. A larger committee grew by accretion into what is now known as the Organizing Committee of the Friends of the Columbia Libraries. Subcommittees were appointed to formulate constructive policies and plans for the group.

The men and women who are sponsoring this revived organization are representative of the love of books that surrounds the Columbia Library. They are:

1. Dallas Pratt (Chairman): graduate of Columbia's medical school, formerly Consulting Psychiatrist in the Columbia Medical Office, and a book collector who has made a specialty of Keats.
2. Seymour M. Adelman, of Chester, Pa.: collector of books and manuscripts of English poetry and American history, and a frequent donor to the Library's Special Collections.
3. Henry Rogers Benjamin: financier and promoter. With his sister, Mrs. Aubrey Cartwright, he presented the Park Benjamin Collection to the Library.
4. Norman Cousins: Editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, leader in significant movements and, decidedly, a man of books.
5. Virginia C. Gildersleeve: Dean Emeritus of Barnard College, and one of Columbia's most distinguished citizens.
6. August Heckscher: Associate Editor of the *Herald-Tribune*, author, and a co-founder of the Ashlar Press.
7. Mrs. Donald F. Hyde: Ph.D. Columbia. With her husband, she is a benefactor of libraries here and abroad, and a keen collector (Mr. and Mrs. Hyde's Samuel Johnson collection is outstanding).
8. Valerien Lada-Mocarski: bank vice-president and director, international man of affairs. He owns a collection of rare books and maps on early travels from the West to Muscovy and on the discovery of Alaska. He will become Chairman of the Friends in 1952.

There are in addition three ex officio members:

Carl M. White: Director of Libraries and Dean of the School of Library Service.

Langdon Sully: Director of Development for the Libraries.

Merle M. Hoover (Secretary): sponsor of the Park Benjamin Collection, author, and for thirty years a faculty member at Columbia.

The work of the Committee so far has been exploratory, but with a growing sense of the significance of its effort. The subcommittees have endeavored to draw up an appropriate constitution and to plan a membership drive and a series of activities.

These activities reached their climax in the meeting held in the Rotunda of Low Memorial Library on the evening of May 1, 1951. Roland Baughman, Director of Special Collections, had arranged in cases around the Rotunda a selection of the "One Hundred Chief Treasures" of the Library and had prepared a catalogue that should eventually be a collector's item. Dallas Pratt presided. Dr. Kirk, Vice President and Provost of the University, extended a welcome to the guests and gave assurance of the University's approval of and cooperation in the project. Mark Van Doren in the feature speech recalled nostalgic memories of the time when the Rotunda was the main reading room of the library, with the world's best books where the reader could handle and read them. August Heckscher succinctly explained the purpose of the revived "Friends" and made a plea for membership. After the program the Grayson Kirks and the Mark Van Dorens received, and refreshments were served. An audience of over two hundred filled the Rotunda. From comments made then and later, it was evident that those who attended realized that they were sharing in an important project.

During the summer the Committee followed up the impetus afforded by the meeting with an organized membership drive. As a result the present membership is about one hundred, and growing. See the membership list on pages 25-26.

As the school year opens, the Committee is formulating interesting plans. *Columbia Library Columns* will be published in three numbers under the editorship of Dr. Pratt. There will be a number of major meetings during the year. The first will be in the Avery Library on December 11th. Francis Taylor, Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, will preside. The principal speaker will be Ralph Walker, Past President of the American Institute of Architects. An exhibition of the outstanding architectural books of Avery will be arranged and introduced by the Librarian, Professor Van Derpool.

The Story of a Plastic Surgery Library

JEROME P. WEBSTER, M.D.

IF A statistician were to attempt to chart the growth of the Webster Library of Plastic Surgery with all its ramifications, it would require a very complicated series of graphs on one chart or several separate charts. One would have to portray the number of books, reprints, portraits, association items, and also photographs of patients who have been treated, kodachrome slides, motion pictures, and artists' sketch books. All of these form a working unit which may be used for the dissemination of knowledge of the specialty of Plastic Surgery dating from earliest reported history to the present day. It is obvious that in order to make the library most useful it must be thought of as a whole and not just a collection of books stacked away and only accessible through the means of catalogue cards.

The statistician would probably begin with a sharply rising line starting from a base line to represent my first acquisition of medical books. These were textbooks on anatomy, histology, physiology, and physiological chemistry acquired when I started as a callow first year medical student. These handsome volumes with gold leaf titles, glossy paper and countless illustrations, the cost of which bit far more deeply than expected into the budget for the first semester, had been selected with great care after consultation with those students who had been "through the mill" in previous years. They had stressed the fact that any textbook three or four years old was out of date, if a new edition had been published.

The dotted line might then have risen to really tremendous heights within a month after my medical career had begun, for an older schoolmate offered to give me the entire medical library left him as a legacy by his wealthy physician father. Imbued with the idea that only the latest books were of value and faced with the difficulties and expense of storing such a library for six or seven years during the pursuit of Medicine without monetary reward, I felt it unwise to accept this splendid offer. What literary

gems and incunabula this library contained I never learned, but in later years I greatly regretted my decision.

Additional medical textbooks were acquired as new courses were started, and an appreciation of the value of old books was gradually gained as reference to original sources was required. The hectic days of an overworked interne and assistant resident in Surgery left far too little time for reading and the collection of books.

Returning to a year of post-war residency in Baltimore, the "call of the East" from the Rockefeller Foundation in 1921 was answered, and four years of surgical work in the unique city of Peking followed. Here in that picturesque new medical school and hospital was installed the most outstanding medical library west of California, and more time was given me for delving into medical literature and for the acquisition of a library.

It was a fertile field for a budding plastic surgeon, and the all too scanty literature on reparative procedures was eagerly scanned. The challenge of many difficult cases and the joy which came from restoring the bodies and souls of these distressed patients, together with an apparent flair for this type of surgery, seemed to indicate that a professional niche had been reached.

Upon returning to New York in April 1928 for the opening of the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, I soon discovered and frequented the splendid Medical Library there. Particularly helpful, painstaking, and stimulating was Miss Elizabeth E. Schramm, the Assistant Medical Librarian at that time. She carefully searched in books and magazines for all information relating to the bizarre cases encountered in the Plastic Surgery Clinic I had started, and occasionally as we looked over the reference cards and articles she had collected, she would wait patiently for me to awake when I dozed off after a long day of operations. She also exposed me to the pleasurable but pocket-emptying delights of book catalogue perusal. While such of the few modern textbooks of Plastic Surgery as those of John Staige Davis and Sir Harold Gillies had been acquired, practically nothing of the older works on Plastic Surgery was then included in my collection.

Dr. Allen O. Whipple, Professor of Surgery at Presbyterian

Hospital, had wisely permitted the funds collected from my private patients during my three years of service on full-time salary to be placed in a special Plastic Surgery Fund which was put at my disposal. From this fund I was enabled not only to pay for my expenses to attend occasional medical meetings but also to buy the equipment for building up the Division of Plastic Surgery, and to procure books relating to this specialty.

In 1929 Miss Schramm called to my attention an enticing item offered for sale,—a copy of the first folio edition of Gaspare Tagliacozzi's classic, the first book published on Plastic Surgery, *De curtorum chirurgia per insitionem* (The surgery of deformities by transplantation), apud G. Bindonum Jr., Venice, 1597. The sale price of £50, or approximately \$250, seemed at that time rather out of reach, but the book was eventually cabled for and joyfully received. The possession of a copy of this early monument in the specialty whetted not only my interest in the history of the subject, but also my desire to learn all I could about the life of this pioneer. All available information relating to this man was eagerly absorbed, but so little was known about his life that a personal investigation of original sources seemed only fitting.

In 1931, before I started in private practice, a trip was taken to Europe with the main object of finding one or two original documents about Tagliacozzi. The result of this trip was that well over one hundred such documents were eventually unearthed with the collaboration of Miss Martha Teach, later Mrs. Dante Gnudi, a graduate of the University of Southern California. I found her in Bologna, acquiring her Ph.D. degree on a fellowship there at the "Alma Mater Studiorum." With her services secured for an investigation in Italy for two periods of six months each, separated by a like period of time in the United States, the search developed into a hunt comparable to a Sherlock Holmes tale. It culminated in the publication in 1935 of a preliminary book in Italian briefly describing Tagliacozzi's life as we had been able to reconstruct it from these newly found documents, and in a much more comprehensive study which was published in English early in 1951.*

* The Life and Times of Gaspare Tagliacozzi, Surgeon of Bologna, 1545-1599, by Martha Teach Gnudi and Jerome Pierce Webster, New York, 1951.

In the interval between the appearance of these two books all the available pertinent publications relating to this period were acquired for leisurely study in the library. The easy access to this material for reference proved most valuable in the compilation of an accurate history of the period.

During the 1931 trip to Europe the earliest known procedures for transferring full thickness flaps from one lip to another were rediscovered and various libraries in Copenhagen, Berlin, Leipzig, Bologna, Paris and London were visited to comb their shelves for all books relating to Plastic Surgery. Those shops in Berlin and Leipzig in particular were fruitful, not only in the way of books but also of original theses which are so often hidden away and not made available to investigators.

It was at this time that I ran across the trail of Dr. William H. Welch, better known as "Popsy," who was scouring Europe to collect books for the new library named after him at Johns Hopkins, and I learned of one incident of his trip. He had wandered into a small bookshop in Paris and asked to see all the medical books that were there. The bookseller presently brought two books to the table where Popsy had seated himself, and then left for a further search, eventually fetching a total of eight more books. Popsy immediately recognized one of the first two books as being one of which there were only two known copies. This rarity he pushed aside and bargained with the bookseller for the remaining nine. A moderate sum was asked for these, and Popsy haggled for a time over the quoted price. Finally he said, "Well, if you'll throw this one in," pointing to the tenth book, "I'll take them at that price"—and was sold the lot. This shrewd bargaining which probably came down from Popsy's New England horse-trading ancestors was made possible only by Popsy's remarkable memory and his wide knowledge of the literature of the field of medicine.

As private practice increased it was possible to buy more important works in the field of Plastic Surgery as they appeared in the catalogues. In 1932 one of those items which was sought and to which a slight reference was found in an article, was Alexander Read's book, *Chirurgorum comes, or the whole practice of*

chirurgery, London, 1687. This book was probably published by one of Read's students under his name after Read's death. A photostatic copy of the title page of this work had been obtained from the Surgeon General's Library, and further photostats of the first six pages relating to Plastic Surgery were requested.

At this time I was a "tutor" living in the penthouse in Bard Hall, the medical student residence which overlooks the Hudson River. One evening a second year medical student called upon me to ask if I could identify a portion of a book he had found in the attic of the house to which his family had just moved. Without covers or back, it had evidently been torn out of a book and discarded as worthless by the previous occupants of the house. In print and format, it was comparable to books published during the latter part of the 17th century, and as I perused the pages I discovered that it dealt first with Midwifery and then with Plastic Surgery. Subsequent comparison with the photostatic pages later received from the Surgeon General's Library identified it as Read's book summarizing, chapter by chapter, the second part of Tagliacozzi's classic which dealt with the practice of the art of Plastic Surgery. I naturally was extremely anxious to possess this small portion of Read's book, as it gave the essence of Tagliacozzi's method of restoring deformed noses.

Three years earlier I had started having a translation made of the meandering thoughts in Tagliacozzi's Part I on the Theory of the Art. It was extremely important to acquire this summary of Read. However, the medical student's enthusiasm to start collecting books on medical history with this fragment as a beginning was so great that I couldn't even think of asking him to sell it and so possibly nip in the bud what might otherwise become a flowering avocation. Not until eight years later was a copy of Read's book discovered in a catalogue and acquired. A second more perfect copy was obtained for the library four years later. The rarity of this item caused us to print in our 1951 English edition Read's entire abstract of Part II of Tagliacozzi's book along with new abstracts made of Part I to render Read's book readily available.

About this time Oscar Rothacker of Berlin offered for sale a remarkable number of books and theses which combined the li-

braries of two plastic surgeons. Here was a chance to raise the dotted line of the graph to undreamed of heights. The price asked was well above my ability to pay at that time, and this wonderfully fine collection seemed almost unobtainable. However, when it was learned that another American plastic surgeon, since deceased, was dickering for it, means for bringing it to the Medical Center were obtained by persuading Dr. Whipple to advance a sufficient amount of money from funds at his disposal until this could be repaid. Arrangements were made for an immediate down payment to the bookseller with the remainder cared for on the installment plan, and the books were shipped to New York.

It was my misfortune to have the German mark increase in value at just this time, before it eventually dipped to almost unfathomed depths with the inflation which subsequently ensued. However, the books were here, crowded into two of the three rooms which had been assigned me under the McCosh surgical amphitheater. These volumes vied for space with the growing number of files of correspondence and of many hundreds of photographs of patients which recorded various stages of the repair of their deformities. These duplicate copies of photographs, now greatly augmented, form an important part of the library for the purpose of comparison and study and for use in the publication of articles.

The Rothacker collection contained many volumes and dissertations relating wholly or in part to Plastic Surgery. Among the rare items were three incunabula volumes in mint condition—Argellata's *Chirurgia*, 1497, and Nicolaus Falcutius' *Sermones medicinales*, 1490-91 (2 vols.), all in contemporary bindings with rich blind tooling.

One of the most useful volumes acquired by this purchase was the remarkable and comparatively rare bibliographical work of Eduard Zeis, *Die literatur und geschichte der plastischen chirurgie*, Leipzig, 1863. With this and its even rarer "Supplement" as a basis, an endeavor has been made to obtain every principal item listed therein. During the past eighteen years only twice has this book appeared in catalogues. Both of these were purchased and one given to a resident in Plastic Surgery after the completion of

his service to stimulate his fledgling efforts in book collecting and to be a guide for the formation of his plastic surgery library.

In the ensuing years an effort has been made to fill every lacuna that existed in this special library, but the field is so broad, touching as it does on all the other surgical and many of the medical and dental specialties, that the aim to fill all lacunae in the collection can never be attained.

The Webster Library of Plastic Surgery is probably the most complete in existence. It now consists of approximately 15,000 items of which about 3,500 are books, 8,000 theses and dissertations, and the remainder reprints of articles published in medical magazines. Some 20 current periodicals dealing with various phases of Plastic Surgery and medical history are on the shelves, readily available to staff members and students.

The book and periodical division of the library is made up of three main groups: first, recent books, and reprints and periodicals dealing with Plastic Surgery which were published after 1800, since this date approximates the beginning of the revival of the art of Plastic Surgery in Europe, after it had lain dormant for nearly 200 years following Tagliacozzi and his immediate successors; second, medical and surgical works of the past dealing wholly or in part with Plastic Surgery; and third, reference works—histories of medicine, biographies, bibliographies and dictionaries.

Among the rare volumes in the collection is Walter Ryff's *Die grosz chirurgen*, 1545, and another is the *Italia* of Giovanni Antonio Magini (1555–1617), who was a colleague of Tagliacozzi. This volume, a magnificent early cartography of Italy, is seldom seen today.

Another rarity is Thomas Gemini's plagiarism of the Anatomy of Vesalius, *Compendiosa totius anatomie delineatio*, London, 1553. This is said to contain the first steel engravings to have been made in England and to be the first medical book published in English.

To the library is added a collection of objects, such as instruments used in Plastic Surgery, portraits of famous plastic surgeons, including a charcoal drawing of the fabulous Dieffenbach and

another of his wife, and autographs, with the prize item a unique parchment record book from the Pharmacy of St. Paul in Bologna, containing prescriptions signed by the various proto-medici, such as Aldrovandi and Tagliacozzi or their colleagues who wrote in it for a period of 30 years around the turn of the 16th century. (In so far as is known, this is the only signature of Tagliacozzi in the United States.) Lastly, there are numerous engravings. One of these is the seldom-seen 1794 picture of the Hindu rhinoplastic operation which sparked the revival of Plastic Surgery in Europe a few years later. From a recent trip to Europe there were brought back two of the three life-size engravings done by Ercole Lelli in 1780-81 of the famous flayed figures sculptured by him in wood. These upheld the figure of Anatomy in the Archiginnasio in Bologna before this structure was bombed in World War II. Only eight such sets of engravings are known to exist today.

For several years a collection was made of books, manuscript lecture notes made by medical students, autographs, and letters and pictures relating to the history, before 1830, of King's College Medical School, the Medical Department of Columbia College and the College of Physicians and Surgeons. It was subsequently felt that this collection more properly belonged with a similar collection in the Medical Library. All the items were accordingly donated to this library, many of them being deemed so rare and valuable as to warrant inclusion with others in the safe of the Dean of the Medical School.

It was in 1939 that negotiations were started to turn the Library of Plastic Surgery over to Columbia. Various conditions were considered to govern such a gift and rules were formulated for the use of the books under a closer association with the Medical Library. After a few minor modifications, President Butler stated that these conditions were satisfactory and he consented to a deed of gift to Columbia being drawn.

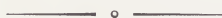
It is obvious that no collection of books is doing valuable service if it is not used; with certain precautions, it should be made as accessible as possible to those most interested in and entitled to use it. There is much pleasure and temptation to browse if one is

frequently exposed to stacks of books, properly grouped, where the titles are invitingly near and the lifting of a hand reveals the minds and methods of outstanding men of today and yesteryear.

An attempt has been made to attract the members of the Plastic Surgery Staff to use this library with all its thousands of photographic records and artists' drawings as well as printed items. Staff conferences are regularly held in the Library. Here, on the spur of the moment, a series of photographs can be "pulled," koda-chrome films projected, drawings of operative steps demonstrated or an original source book reached for.

The Library of the Royal College of Surgeons has recently been made by Lord Webb-Johnson more attractive and alive by having dinners for 200 or more persons served each month in the main reading room. This summer I was honored by being dined at the College in a small library in the President's rooms. The dinner was served at a table decorated by silver which had once belonged to Henry VIII, to William Harvey, who discovered the circulation of the blood, to the great Cheselden, to Bland-Sutton and to others. We sat about the table surrounded by aging tomes and ancient pharmaceutical jars, and the giants of old looked over our shoulders. Who could plot a chart to denote the interest such a picture engenders?

While it is possible to show the physical growth of the Webster Library by a complicated graph, one can *never* measure the influence such a living collection exerts.



Chance Encounters at Avery

JAMES GROTE VAN DERPOOL

Avery Librarian

On page 21 we begin the first of a series of articles describing "Adventures in Acquisitions": an account of experiences connected with recent additions to the Collections. Here, the Avery Librarian has surveyed like experience in recent years at America's leading architectural Library, which will be the setting of the December meeting of the Friends.

RECENTLY I have found myself indulging in a highly unprofessional form of speculation. That this should occur in the year of the heaviest responsibilities that I have so far encountered, is in itself somewhat odd. One hopes the term "escapism" can somehow be excluded from this discussion.

Briefly, I began to inquire in what way the great collections of the world, whether in art, in books, rare furniture or other delightful things, would have been altered if the element of chance, unwarranted enthusiasm of a moment or unexpected generosity in unforeseen places, had been barred from the process of forming a collection.

The fascinating, but certainly unscientific, procedures which resulted in the forming of the Imperial Austrian Collections are well known. In our own country the inside history of the Gardner Collection in Boston is an exciting narrative. The Morgan, the Frick, the Bache and other great American collections do not stem from a coldly scientific, dispassionate approach to the problem. The heart, as well as the mind, chance as well as controlled circumstances, certainly entered into the achievements represented by these great collections.

In a lesser way it strikes one that Avery Architectural Library has not achieved its unique position in the world solely through the use of the "little grey cells." Thinking over the history of the collection, one is forced to admit that the deity who controls chance circumstance has occasionally looked this way, sometimes in an oddly amusing fashion. I still recall with embarrassment and some perplexity how the beautiful Avery copy of one of the

rarest of 16th century French architectural books came to Columbia. For thirty years Avery Library had tried unsuccessfully to secure a fine copy of Jacques Androuet du Cerceau's *Les plus excellents bastiments de France* . . . Cables had been sent to the great countries of Europe when a copy would be offered. With an unfailing regularity replies would come: "Regret, copy sold." At auctions, others with a freer purse would gleefully divert it from us.

One day a friend of the library reported that he was disposing of his books and that Avery might have priority in choosing from them. I spent a day examining a great room filled from floor to ceiling with delightful volumes, finding only three which were not already in our collection. Two weeks later I sat at my desk and in my mind's eye saw the bookshelves to the right of the fireplace in the room I had visited earlier. With curious clarity I could read the name "du Cerceau" on the back of one of the books. Apologetically, I phoned and asked the secretary in the household to check the fifth shelf, one-third of the way over from the right flank of the chimney breast, to see if such a volume were there. To my surprise the answer was in the affirmative, but unhappily, only the first of the two volumes was reported present. Collectors will appreciate my hesitation over the idea of acquiring only half of a two-volume set, but since we had a beautiful facsimile of the entire work, it was decided gratefully to accept the isolated volume. In the back of my mind was the thought that some day we might have to purchase both volumes in order to obtain the complete work.

I went for the book personally but could not examine it, because of involved circumstances, until the next day. Volume II was bound with Volume I—we had a complete copy! Clearly, a benevolent deity controlled the situation.

The chief possession of the Avery collection is the great unpublished Serlio manuscript on domestic architecture, which was lost before it could find its place in the published works of Sebastiano Serlio around the middle of the 16th century. The publishers substituted what Serlio drawings they could find dealing with the problem, and brought a substitute volume into being.

Incorrectly designated, the lost manuscript turned up in England in the 18th century, found its way into a Scotch collection in the 19th century, and, by an odd chance, in the 20th century passed through a London dealer's hands and was directed to Avery Library. It remained here for two years, before sufficient financial assistance could be secured for its acquisition. The Avery Librarian of the time, a noted scholar, following a line of reasoning that the Baker Street Regulars would have applauded, finally identified it as the missing Serlio and doubtless the most important Renaissance architectural manuscript in this country.

Dr. Dinsmoor has worked on this manuscript for more than twenty years and it is hoped that it may be published as a *first edition* of Serlio in 1954, to mark the 200th anniversary of Columbia College, which by strange chance coincides with the 400th anniversary of the death of Sebastiano Serlio.

A situation that we still smile at in Avery began in a light-hearted way when the Assistant Librarian was leaving for Europe for family reasons, and inquired if there was any commission he could undertake for Avery. Jokingly, I wrote out: "John Shute, *The first and chief grovndes of architecture* . . . London, 1563." This was the first architectural book printed in the English language. There are only six known copies in the world, five of which are already in public collections in Great Britain. We parted, smiling knowingly at our little joke. Later, he visited a famous dealer in London and asked to be notified should a copy ever come to the knowledge of that dealer. The dealer turned to a locked compartment, took out a book and inquired laconically: "Is this, by any chance, the one you're looking for?" It was the sixth copy—the only one in the world still available—now no longer available except to users of Avery!

I would be reluctant to convey the idea that there is a private telephone connection between Avery and Olympus. Actually, while a score of such happy accidents have occurred, in all honesty I am compelled to admit that Avery does not depend *solely* for its growth on such "guided circumstances."



Adventures in Acquisitions

ROLAND BAUGHMAN

Director of Special Collections

In each issue of Columbia Library Columns, some of the more notable current additions to the collections will be discussed. Such additions fall into distinct categories, and it will be by categories that they will be described. The present article deals with gifts of single items that have come in recent months—items that are unique in every sense; unique in themselves, and unique in the fact that their deposit in the Columbia Libraries is the result of a combination of rare circumstances. Their acquisition carries the special responsibility that goes with the custodianship of treasures that belong not to any single individual or institution, but form part of the whole range of cultural resources of the entire intellectual world.

MORE than forty years ago, on January 19, 1909, Columbia University held a celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Edgar Allan Poe. For the occasion a select exhibition was placed on display, consisting of notable Poe editions and manuscripts, many of which had been borrowed for the occasion from friends of Columbia.

Among the borrowed items were three priceless relics of Poe's fevered life—a rare daguerreotype portrait showing the author in one of his last poses; a letter in Poe's careful script to one of his several publishers, John Reuben Thompson, editor of *The Southern Literary Messenger*; and an original manuscript of "Annabel Lee," one of three copies in Poe's handwriting now known to exist. All of these mementoes had once belonged to Thompson; upon his death they had passed first to his sister, Mrs. Quarles, and then to his second cousin, Isaac Michael Dyckman. They had been lent for the exhibition by Mr. Dyckman's widow.

Within recent weeks these three precious relics were once again brought to Columbia—this time to remain as a permanent part of the resources which are preserved in the Columbia Libraries. They had been bequeathed to the University by the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dyckman, the late Mrs. Alexander McMillan Welch—a true friend of Columbia, and a generous donor to the Libraries.

On the morning of May 27, 1773, George Washington escorted his stepson, John Parke Custis, to the portals of King's College (as Columbia was then called) to be enrolled as a student. They had made the tedious journey from Mount Vernon on the strength of the excellent reputation of King's College, and because it was situated in New York—"the most polite and fashionable place on the continent." Many years later, in 1789, Washington, then just beginning his first term as President of the United States, attended the Columbia College commencement exercises in St. Paul's Chapel at Broadway and Vesey Street—possibly his first appearance as President at a public function not directly connected with official matters.

Only a few months ago Mr. Charles Moran, Jr., presented to Columbia University George Washington's manuscript diaries for the years 1795 and 1798—the former Washington's last year but one as President of his country, the latter his last year but one of mortal life. These were the only Washington diaries known to have remained in private hands, and they had been treasured and passed on by successive generations of Mr. Moran's family since 1827, when they had been given to his maternal ancestors, Robert and Margaret Adams of Philadelphia, by Judge Bushrod Washington, the First President's nephew and literary executor. Now they have been entrusted to the Columbia Libraries for preservation and for wider use by scholars.



In the year 1752 Benjamin Franklin printed a little volume of precepts in logic and metaphysics entitled *Elementa Philosophica: containing chiefly, Noetica*. It had been compiled by Dr. Samuel Johnson (who was later to become the first president of King's College) for the edification of his sons; it was also to be used, in the published form, as a text in the College that was then being organized.

The Printer and the Scholar were well acquainted, and an extensive correspondence between them is known. Recently there turned up a letter, dated October 27, 1753, from Franklin to Johnson which dealt with the latter's volume, *Noetica*. Learning

of this letter, Mr. Edmund Prentis (EM, '06) immediately purchased it and has placed it in the Columbia University Libraries.

Dr. Hideki Yukawa, hospitalized by fatigue following his receipt of the Nobel Award in Physics in 1949, was visited by President Eisenhower, who admired a painting which had been sent to the physicist by Fukuda Bisen, artist of Hyogo Prefecture in Japan. The General's admiration of the painting was relayed to Mr. Fukuda, who replied that he would like to reproduce his earlier work of thirty scrolls depicting China scenes, for deposit in and the decoration of the East Asiatic Library of Columbia University. Mr. Fukuda had twice before painted the scenes, each time in thirty scrolls, each scroll measuring two-and-a-half feet by forty feet; both sets had been disastrously destroyed. To accomplish his new undertaking Mr. Fukuda, who was 76 on September 5th of this year, schedules one scroll every three months; the entire project, on that basis, will take more than seven years to complete. The first scroll was received in May and is on view now in the East Asiatic Library. Two others have already been started on their voyage across the Pacific Ocean.

These are some of the adventures in the growth of the Columbia Libraries which we want to share with our friends. The items described above are unique treasures: they will be protected carefully and worn proudly, as befits crown jewels. But by their addition to the roll of similar treasures already here through the generosity of past benefactors, a special kind of strength and value is created for them which is over and above the intrinsic worth of the individual pieces:—the strength of union, the value that is formed of numbers and variety. These are shared increases; by their acquisition all of Columbia's resources have been enhanced in usefulness to scholars and to future generations of students.

Other Recent Gifts

- HEPBURN, HAWLEY S. Four manuscript diaries of the Civil War period, describing life in the camps and hospitals. *From Prof. Roland Gibson, University of Illinois.*
- KELLY, J. FREDERICK. The twenty large original drawings prepared for his *Early Connecticut Architecture* (William Helburn, Inc.), together with the proof plates. *From Mrs. Hannah D. Helburn.*
- MERCIER, VIVIAN H. S. Ten letters from various literary contemporaries. *From Mr. Vivian H. S. Mercier.*
- JAPANESE AND WESTERN PUBLICATIONS. Fifteen Japanese language publications and ten Western language publications, dictionaries, anthologies, etc. Of special interest is a copy of the *Rômaji Mannyôshû*, a complete romanized version of the oldest of the early Japanese anthologies. *From Mr. Dan F. Waugh.*
- TILDEN, SAMUEL J. A large collection of letters, manuscripts, pamphlets, clippings, etc. of the American statesman representing his political campaign and career. *From Mrs. William Roy Smith.*
- ALLEN, ARTHUR S., COLLECTION OF COMMERCIAL TYPOGRAPHY. Eight hundred and fifty booklets, leaflets, brochures, and pamphlets illustrating American commercial typography, ca. 1900-1940. *From Miss Lorain Fawcett.*
- LIMITED EDITIONS. Fifty titles issued by the Limited Editions Club and ten issued by Cheshire House, adding materially to the holdings of the Library in the field of fine printing. *From Mr. William M. Lybrand.*
- LATROBE, BENJAMIN H. A four-page letter, 1798, to Dr. Scandella, a personal letter concerning a hitherto unknown architectural commission. *From Mr. H. G. Dwight.*
- SELIGMAN, EDWIN R. A. Eight volumes from Professor Seligman's personal file of his ephemeral writings—reviews, articles, essays, etc. *From Mr. Eustace Seligman.*
- MATTHEWS, BRANDER. Thirty-three letters to Mrs. Agnes Ethel Tracy and Mrs. Agnes Henderson. *From Prof. Harold G. Henderson.*
- THE CONSERVATOR. A complete set of the *Conservator*, Philadelphia, March, 1890-June, 1919, vols. 1-30, containing extensive Whitman criticism and appreciation. *From Mrs. Frank J. Sprague.*
- SPECIAL EDITIONS. Twenty-seven volumes, autographed editions, inscribed copies, first editions of Theodore Dreiser, John Masfield, Elinor Wylie, *et al.* *From Mrs. Frank J. Sprague.*
- EARLY AMERICAN MANUSCRIPTS AND LETTERS. A collection of manuscripts and printed items of Alexander J. Dallas, Joseph Story, Stephen Girard, *et al.* *From Mr. Seymour Adelman.*
- NOTT, STANLEY CHARLES. *Chinese Jade Carvings of the XVIth to the XIXth Century in the Collection of Mrs. Georg U. Vetlesen.* Three leather-bound folio volumes of a numbered edition describing this famous collection. *From Mrs. Georg U. Vetlesen.*

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